

**CLAIMS**

1-27. (Canceled)

28. (Previously Presented) A machine-implemented method, comprising:

establishing, within a global operating system environment provided by an operating system (OS) kernel, a first non-global zone which serves as a first virtual platform for supporting and isolating user processes, wherein the first non-global zone is a separate and distinct OS partition of the global operating system environment having a first zone identifier associated therewith, and wherein the first non-global zone is established and exists without requiring any user processes to be running therein;

establishing, within the global operating system environment, a second non-global zone which serves as a second virtual platform for supporting and isolating user processes, wherein the second non-global zone is a separate and distinct OS partition of the global operating system environment having a second zone identifier associated therewith, and wherein the second non-global zone is established and exists without requiring any user processes to be running therein;

executing a first set of one or more user processes within the first non-global zone;

executing a second set of one or more user processes within the second non-global zone; and

isolating the first set of one or more user processes within the first non-global zone and the second set of one or more user processes within the second non-global zone such that the first set of one or more user processes cannot access processes in the second non-global zone and the second set of one or more user processes cannot access processes in the first non-global zone;

wherein the first and second non-global zones are established by the OS kernel, and wherein the OS kernel enforces zone boundaries to isolate the first set of one or more user processes within the first non-global zone and the second set of one or more user processes within the second non-global zone.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein the OS kernel provides services that are invoked by the first set of user processes, and wherein the services are invoked by the first set of user processes through the first virtual platform.

30-31. Canceled

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28,  
wherein a first set of resources are associated with the first non-global zone and a second set of resources are associated with the second non-global zone;  
wherein the first set of resources are accessed by the first set of one or more user processes through the first virtual platform and the second set of resources are accessed by the second set of one or more user processes through the second virtual platform; and  
wherein the first set of resources and the second set of resources each include one or more resources from the group consisting of a network interface, a communications interface, a file system, a system console, a DASD address, and an operating system service process.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32, wherein isolating the first set of user processes within the first non-global zone and the second set of user processes within the second non-global zone further comprises:

preventing the first set of user processes from accessing the second set of resources associated with the second non-global zone; and

preventing the second set of user processes from accessing the first set of resources associated with the first non-global zone.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32, wherein executing the first set of user processes within the first non-global zone causes a first application environment to be established within the first non-global zone, and wherein the method further comprises:

receiving a command to halt the first non-global zone;

in response to the command to halt the first non-global zone:

terminating all user processes executing within the first non-global zone,

thereby terminating the first application environment; and

disassociating the first set of resources from the first non-global zone;

wherein the second non-global zone is not affected by the command to halt the first non-global zone.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 32, wherein executing the first set of user processes within the first non-global zone causes a first application environment to be established within the first non-global zone, and wherein the method further comprises:

receiving a command to halt the first non-global zone;

in response to the command to halt the first non-global zone:

- terminating all user processes executing within the first non-global zone,
- thereby terminating the first application environment; and
- performing one or more tasks from the group consisting of stopping a scheduler process, unmounting one or more file systems, closing one or more network interfaces, and removing configurations for devices associated with the first non-global zone;

wherein the second non-global zone is not affected by the command to halt the first non-global zone.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, further comprising:

- allowing a first administrator to manage processes and resources within the first non-global zone, wherein the first administrator is not allowed to manage processes and resources within the second non-global zone; and
- allowing a second administrator to manage processes and resources within the second non-global zone, wherein the second administrator is not allowed to manage processes and resources within the first non-global zone.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein establishing the first non-global zone comprises:

- assigning the first zone identifier, plumbing one or more network interfaces, and mounting one or more file systems;

wherein establishing the first non-global zone does not include executing user processes within the first non-global zone.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the configuration information comprises one or more parameters from the group consisting of a zone name, a path to a root directory for the first non-global zone, specification of one or more file systems to be mounted when the first non-global zone is created, specification of one or more network interfaces, specification of one or more devices to be configured when the first non-global zone is created, and specification of resource controls to be imposed on the first non-global zone.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein executing the first set of one or more user processes within the first non-global zone comprises:

executing an initialization process; and

initializing, by the initialization process, execution of the first set of one or more user processes.

40. (Previously Presented) A machine-readable storage medium storing one or more sets of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, cause the one or more processors to perform the steps of:

establishing, within a global operating system environment provided by an operating system (OS) kernel, a first non-global zone which serves as a first virtual platform for supporting and isolating user processes, wherein the first non-global zone is a separate and

distinct OS partition of the global operating system environment having a first zone identifier associated therewith, and wherein the first non-global zone is established and exists without requiring any user processes to be running therein;

establishing, within the global operating system environment, a second non-global zone which serves as a second virtual platform for supporting and isolating user processes, wherein the second non-global zone is a separate and distinct OS partition of the global operating system environment having a second zone identifier associated therewith, and wherein the second non-global zone is established and exists without requiring any user processes to be running therein;

executing a first set of one or more user processes within the first non-global zone;

executing a second set of one or more user processes within the second non-global zone; and

isolating the first set of one or more user processes within the first non-global zone and the second set of one or more user processes within the second non-global zone such that the first set of one or more user processes cannot access processes in the second non-global zone and the second set of one or more user processes cannot access processes in the first non-global zone;

wherein the first and second non-global zones are established by the OS kernel, and wherein the OS kernel enforces zone boundaries to isolate the first set of one or more user processes within the first non-global zone and the second set of one or more user processes within the second non-global zone.

41. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 40, wherein the OS kernel provides services that are invoked by the first set of user processes, and wherein the services are invoked by the first set of user processes through the first virtual platform.

42-43. Canceled

44. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 40, wherein a first set of resources are associated with the first non-global zone and a second set of resources are associated with the second non-global zone; wherein the first set of resources are accessed by the first set of one or more user processes through the first virtual platform and the second set of resources are accessed by the second set of one or more user processes through the second virtual platform; and wherein the first set of resources and the second set of resources each include one or more resources from the group consisting of a network interface, a communications interface, a file system, a system console, a DASD address, and an operating system service process.

45. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 44, wherein isolating the first set of user processes within the first non-global zone and the second set of user processes within the second non-global zone further comprises: preventing the first set of user processes from accessing the second set of resources associated with the second non-global zone; and

preventing the second set of user processes from accessing the first set of resources associated with the first non-global zone.

46. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 44, wherein executing the first set of user processes within the first non-global zone causes a first application environment to be established within the first non-global zone, and wherein the machine-readable storage medium further stores one or more sets of instructions for causing the one or more processors to perform the steps of:

receiving a command to halt the first non-global zone;

in response to the command to halt the first non-global zone:

terminating all user processes executing within the first non-global zone,

thereby terminating the first application environment; and

disassociating the first set of resources from the first non-global zone;

wherein the second non-global zone is not affected by the command to halt the first non-global zone.

47. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 44, wherein executing the first set of user processes within the first non-global zone causes a first application environment to be established within the first non-global zone, and wherein the machine-readable storage medium further stores one or more sets of instructions for causing the one or more processors to perform the steps of:

receiving a command to halt the first non-global zone;

in response to the command to halt the first non-global zone:



terminating all user processes executing within the first non-global zone,  
thereby terminating the first application environment; and  
performing one or more tasks from the group consisting of stopping a  
scheduler process, unmounting one or more file systems, closing one  
or more network interfaces, and removing configurations for devices  
associated with the first non-global zone;

wherein the second non-global zone is not affected by the command to halt the first non-global zone.

48. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 40, wherein the machine-readable storage medium further stores one or more sets of instructions for causing the one or more processors to perform the steps of:

allowing a first administrator to manage processes and resources within the first non-global zone, wherein the first administrator is not allowed to manage processes and resources within the second non-global zone; and

allowing a second administrator to manage processes and resources within the second non-global zone, wherein the second administrator is not allowed to manage processes and resources within the first non-global zone.

49. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 40, wherein establishing the first non-global zone comprises:

assigning the first zone identifier, plumbing one or more network interfaces, and mounting one or more file systems;

wherein establishing the first non-global zone does not include executing user processes within the first non-global zone.

50. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 49, wherein the configuration information comprises one or more parameters from the group consisting of a zone name, a path to a root directory for the first non-global zone, specification of one or more file systems to be mounted when the first non-global zone is created, specification of one or more network interfaces, specification of one or more devices to be configured when the first non-global zone is created, and specification of resource controls to be imposed on the first non-global zone.

51. (Previously Presented) The machine-readable storage medium of claim 40, wherein executing the first set of user processes within the first non-global zone comprises:

executing an initializer process; and

initializing, by the initializer process, execution of the first set of user processes.

52. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:

means for establishing, within a global operating system environment provided by an operating system (OS) kernel, a first non-global zone which serves as a first virtual platform for supporting and isolating user processes, wherein the first non-global zone is a separate and distinct OS partition of the global operating system environment having a first zone identifier associated therewith, and wherein the first non-global zone is established and exists without requiring any user processes to be running therein;

means for establishing, within said global operating system environment, a second non-global zone which serves as a second virtual platform for supporting and isolating user processes, wherein the second non-global zone is a separate and distinct OS partition of the global operating system environment having a second zone identifier associated therewith, and wherein the second non-global zone is established and exists without requiring any user processes to be running therein;

means for executing a first set of one or more user processes within the first non-global zone;

means for executing a second set of one or more user processes within the second non-global zone; and

means for isolating the first set of one or more user processes within the first non-global zone and the second set of one or more user processes within the second non-global zone such that the first set of one or more user processes cannot access processes in the second non-global zone and the second set of one or more user processes cannot access processes in the first non-global zone;

wherein the first and second non-global zones are established by the OS kernel, and wherein the OS kernel enforces zone boundaries to isolate the first set of one or more user processes within the first non-global zone and the second set of one or more user processes within the second non-global zone.

53-54. Canceled

55. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 52,

wherein a first set of resources are associated with the first non-global zone and a second set of resources are associated with the second non-global zone;

wherein the first set of resources are accessed by the first set of one or more user processes through the first virtual platform and the second set of resources are accessed by the second set of one or more user processes through the second virtual platform; and

wherein the first set of resources and the second set of resources each include one or more resources from the group consisting of a network interface, a communications interface, a file system, a system console, a DASD address, and an operating system service process.

56. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 55, wherein the means for isolating the first set of user processes within the first non-global zone and the second set of user processes within the second non-global zone further comprises:

means for preventing the first set of user processes from accessing the second set of resources associated with the second non-global zone; and

means for preventing the second set of user processes from accessing the first set of resources associated with the first non-global zone.

57. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 55, wherein executing the first set of user processes within the first non-global zone causes a first application environment to be established within the first non-global zone, and wherein the apparatus further comprises:

means for receiving a command to halt the first non-global zone;

in response to the command to halt the first non-global zone:

means for terminating all user processes executing within the first non-global zone, thereby terminating the first application environment; and  
means for disassociating the first set of resources from the first non-global zone;

wherein the second non-global zone is not affected by the command to halt the first non-global zone.

58. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 55, wherein executing the first set of user processes within the first non-global zone causes a first application environment to be established within the first non-global zone, and wherein the apparatus further comprises:

means for receiving a command to halt the first non-global zone;

in response to the command to halt the first non-global zone:

means for terminating all user processes executing within the first non-global zone, thereby terminating the first application environment; and

means for performing one or more tasks from the group consisting of stopping a scheduler process, unmounting one or more file systems, closing one or more network interfaces, and removing configurations for devices associated with the first non-global zone;

wherein the second non-global zone is not affected by the command to halt the first non-global zone.

59. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 52, wherein the means for establishing the first non-global zone comprises:

means for assigning the first zone identifier, plumbing one or more network interfaces, and mounting one or more file systems;

wherein establishing the first non-global zone does not include executing user processes within the first non-global zone.

60. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 59, wherein the configuration information comprises one or more parameters from the group consisting of a zone name, a path to a root directory for the first non-global zone, specification of one or more file systems to be mounted when the first non-global zone is created, specification of one or more network interfaces, specification of one or more devices to be configured when the first non-global zone is created, and specification of resource controls to be imposed on the first non-global zone.